EU Road Safety Policy Framework 2021-2030 – Recommendations on next steps towards "Vision Zero"

2021/2014(INI) - 22/06/2021 - Committee report tabled for plenary, single reading

The Committee on Transport and Tourism adopted an own-initiative report by Elena KOUNTOURA (GUE/NGL, EL) on the EU road safety policy framework 2021-2030 - Recommendations on the next steps towards 'Vision Zero'.

Every year around **22 700 people still lose their lives on EU roads and around 120 000 are seriously injured**. More than 11 800 children and youngsters up to the age of 17 have been killed in road traffic collisions in the EU over the last 10 years. Progress in reducing EU fatality rates has stagnated in recent years. The EU's long-term vision should therefore be to come as close as possible to 'zero deaths' on the roads by 2050 (Vision Zero).

EU road safety policy framework

Members welcomed the new EU road safety policy framework for the decade 2021-2030, the new targets set and the adoption of the '**safe system**' approach based on a performance framework and timed targets for the reduction of casualties and serious injuries.

They welcomed the introduction of **Key Performance Indicators** (KPIs) and invited all Member States to agree on a harmonised methodology for KPIs that will allow Member States to compare data. The Commission is invited to set outcome targets by 2023.

Members called on the Commission to **increase EU investment** in road safety in all relevant EU funding programmes and on Member States to set aside a sufficient share of their national budgets which, together with EU funds, should enable the implementation of their national road safety programmes and the new EU policy framework.

Safe infrastructure

The report urged Member States and the Commission to prioritise investments that deliver the greatest benefits in terms of road safety, devoting particular attention to the most accident-prone areas when maintaining or building new infrastructure.

Members welcomed the **risk mapping and safety rating of motorways and primary roads** introduced in the recently revised EU infrastructure safety rules.

They urged Member States to designate as many primary roads as possible and to set up, in accordance with the directive, a national voluntary reporting system, accessible online to all road users, to facilitate the collection of data of occurrences transmitted by road users and vehicles.

The report encouraged the Commission and Member States to:

- expedite work on EU specifications for the performance of **road signs and markings** in order to prepare the ground for greater vehicle automation;

- devise quality requirements for **walking and cycling infrastructure** in order to address the insufficient level of safety for active road users and take into account the needs of road users with **reduced mobility** or other disabilities in the planning and construction of new road infrastructure.

As part of the forthcoming revision of the TEN-T regulation, Members recommended that measures be taken to further improve road safety in urban nodes, suburban and rural areas, and to improve operational safety throughout the life cycle of critical infrastructure such as tunnels and bridges.

Safe vehicles

Members welcomed the recent revision of the General Safety Regulation, which will make new advanced safety features in vehicles such as intelligent speed assistance and emergency lane keeping systems mandatory in the EU as from 2022, with the potential to save around 7 300 lives and avoid 38 900 serious injuries by 2030. They called on the Commission to adopt ambitious and timely secondary legislation, which should also require high-performing **intelligent speed assistance systems** to be fitted in all new vehicles.

The Commission is invited, inter alia, to: (i) make the installation of anti-lock braking systems (ABS) on motorbikes mandatory; (ii) further develop the vehicle type approval crashworthiness requirements; (iii) establish a European Action Programme on Turning Assistants; (iv) take into account technical progress on advanced vehicle safety features in the new General Safety Regulation and to include **advanced assistance systems** in the forthcoming revision of the roadworthiness package.

Safe use of the road

Alcohol plays a role in 25% of all fatal road accidents. Members therefore proposed including in the EU recommendations a **zero-tolerance framework for drink-driving** and to introduce a zero-tolerance recommendation for illicit psychoactive substances as well as standards for roadside checks for driving under the influence of drugs.

The Commission is called on to come up with a recommendation to apply **safe speed limits**, in line with the safe system approach for all road types, such as maximum default speeds of 30km/h in residential areas and areas where there are high numbers of cyclists and pedestrians.

The report noted that **10 million major road traffic offences** in the EU related to speeding, driving through red lights and drink-driving **committed by non-residents** are detected each year. It also pointed out the need of further strengthening the efficiency of the existing framework for cross-border enforcement of road traffic offenses, in the upcoming revision of the Directive.

The Commission is also asked to ensure that professional van drivers undergo appropriate training and to address the issue of van drivers' fatigue and speeding, particularly as a result of the large increase in the number of home deliveries since the COVID-19 pandemic.

Framework fit for the future

Members stated that the EU should pave the way for **connected and automated vehicles** to be rolled out in due time and should assess the possible risks of combining such vehicles with traditional vehicles in mixed traffic and vulnerable road users. They called on Member States to set up vehicle scrappage schemes under green conditions to incentivise the purchase and use of safer, clean and energy-efficient vehicles.

In the light of future evolutions, the report, aiming to further enhancing road safety, also asked for a framework to access **in-vehicle data** beyond the repair market in full compliance with the General Data

Protection Regulation. Access to in-vehicle data should be only for accident research and roadworthiness purposes.

Lastly, Members called on the Commission to consider establishing a **European road transport agency** to support sustainable, safe and smart road transport or – if not feasible – to entrust an existing agency with this task.